



The President's Daily Brief

January 13, 1976

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January 13, 1976

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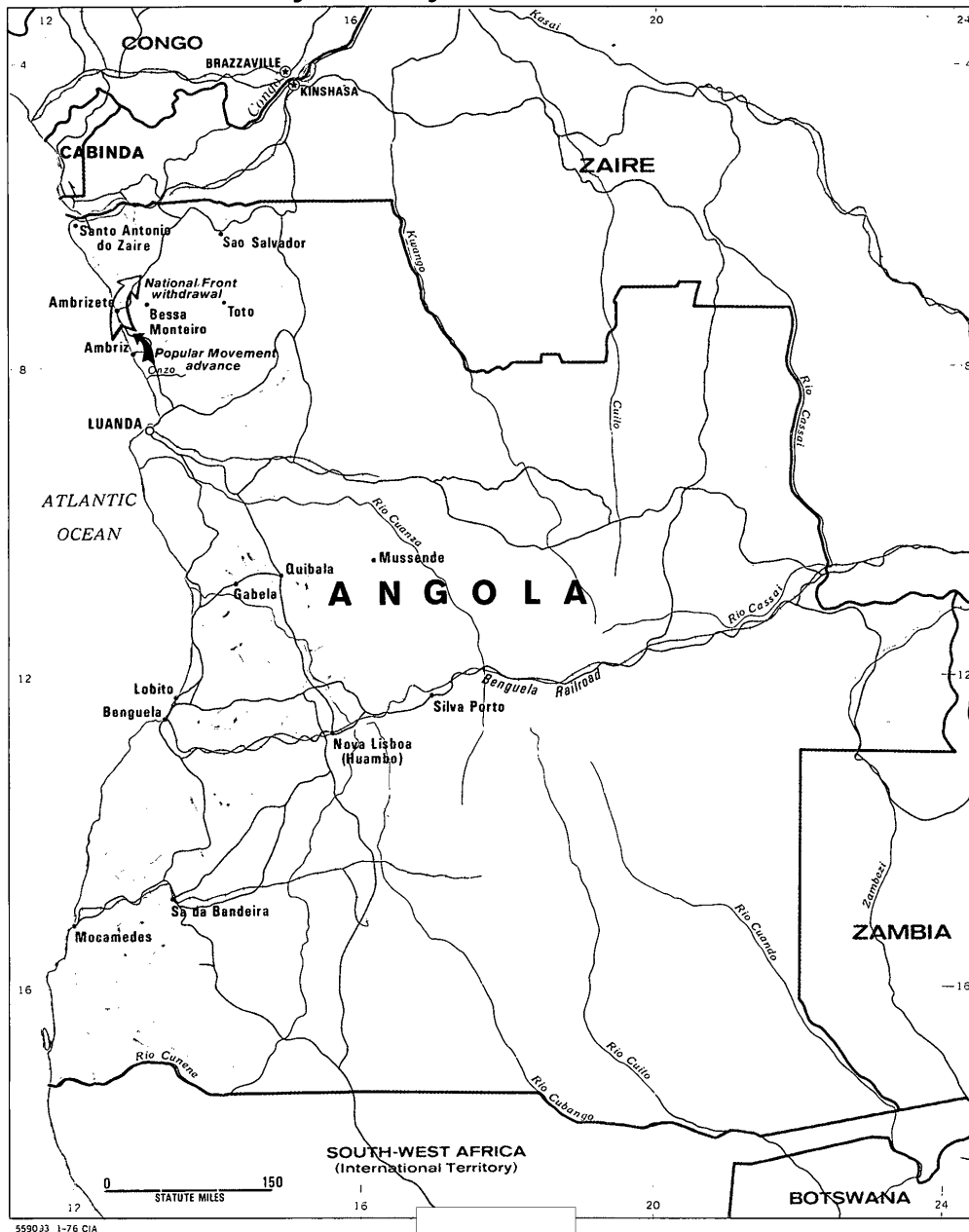
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Current Military Activity



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ANGOLA

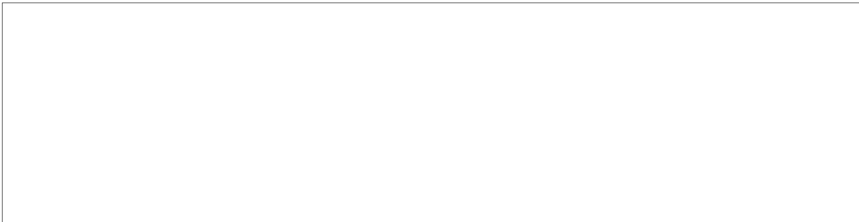
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Popular Movement forces, heavily backed by Cuban troops, are continuing to push northward into the National Front's tribal area and are encountering little resistance from the Front's demoralized troops.

The Front's defenses in northern Angola have collapsed and it is highly unlikely it will be able to resist further advances by the Popular Movement.

Popular Movement forces on Sunday captured Toto and Bessa Monteiro, both key points on the Front's eastern flank from Ambrizete; Front forces are now evacuating Ambrizete.

The Front had withdrawn from its headquarters in Ambriz last week, and its forces were forced to withdraw from its last major base in the central part of northern Angola. The Front's only major fall-back position in the north is Santo Antonio do Zaire.



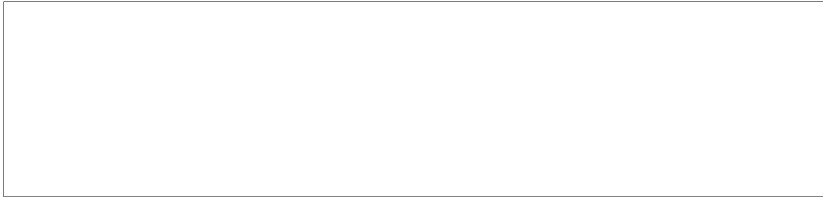
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Havana's Cubana Airlines has made two more flights to Africa via the Azores, presumably transporting Cuban troops to Angola.

The flights occurred over the weekend and carried an estimated 180 passengers. Our consul in the Azores reported that the aircraft were en route to Guinea-Bissau, the usual refueling point for Cuban flights to and from Brazzaville, Congo, and Luanda, Angola. The Cubana Airlines flights are in addition to those being made by Soviet Aeroflot IL-62s. Aeroflot has made daily Havana-Conakry-Luanda flights since January 7; the flights so far have taken an estimated 1,200 Cuban troops to Angola.

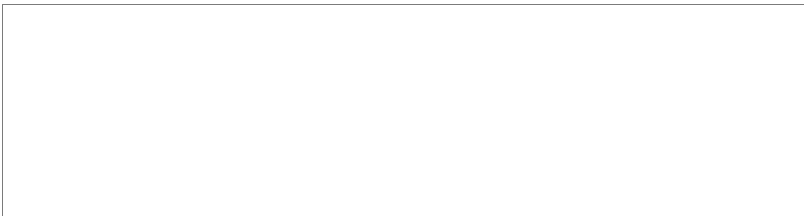
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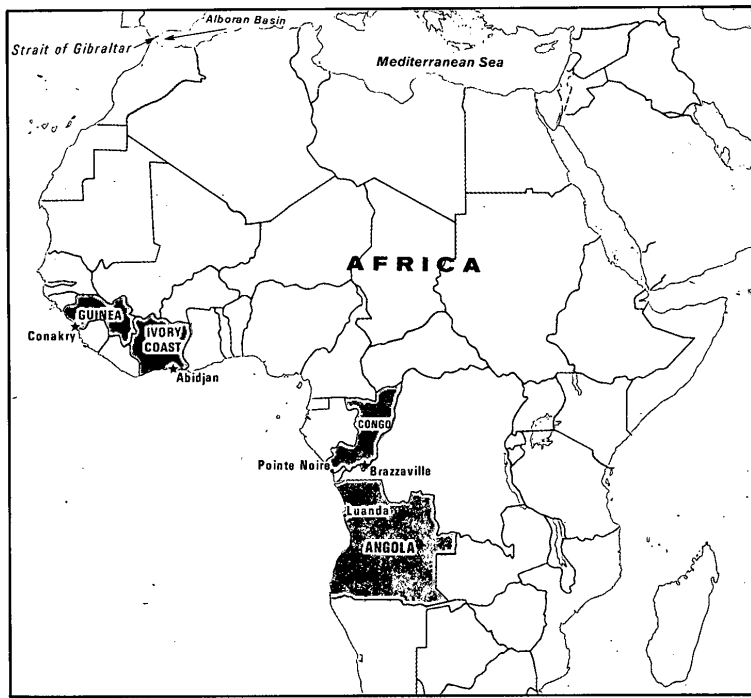


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USSR

Soviet naval activity associated with Angolan developments continues. There are no indications as yet, however, that the three warships near the Strait of Gibraltar will move to West African waters.

A Sverdlov class cruiser has completed its transit of the Mediterranean and currently is in the Alboran Basin just inside the Strait of Gibraltar. It was joined yesterday by the Kresta-I class cruiser that left Northern Fleet waters on January 2. The Kashin class destroyer that accompanied the Kresta-I did not enter the Mediterranean, but is lingering in the approaches to the Strait.

Three other Soviet ships--a Kotlin class destroyer, a landing ship, and a tanker--are in the Gulf of Guinea and are operating in an area some 350 to 500 miles south of Abidjan, Ivory Coast. The destroyer is scheduled to make a port call at Pointe Noire, Congo, early next week. The Soviet Kresta-II class cruiser that arrived at Conakry, Guinea, over the weekend apparently is still there.

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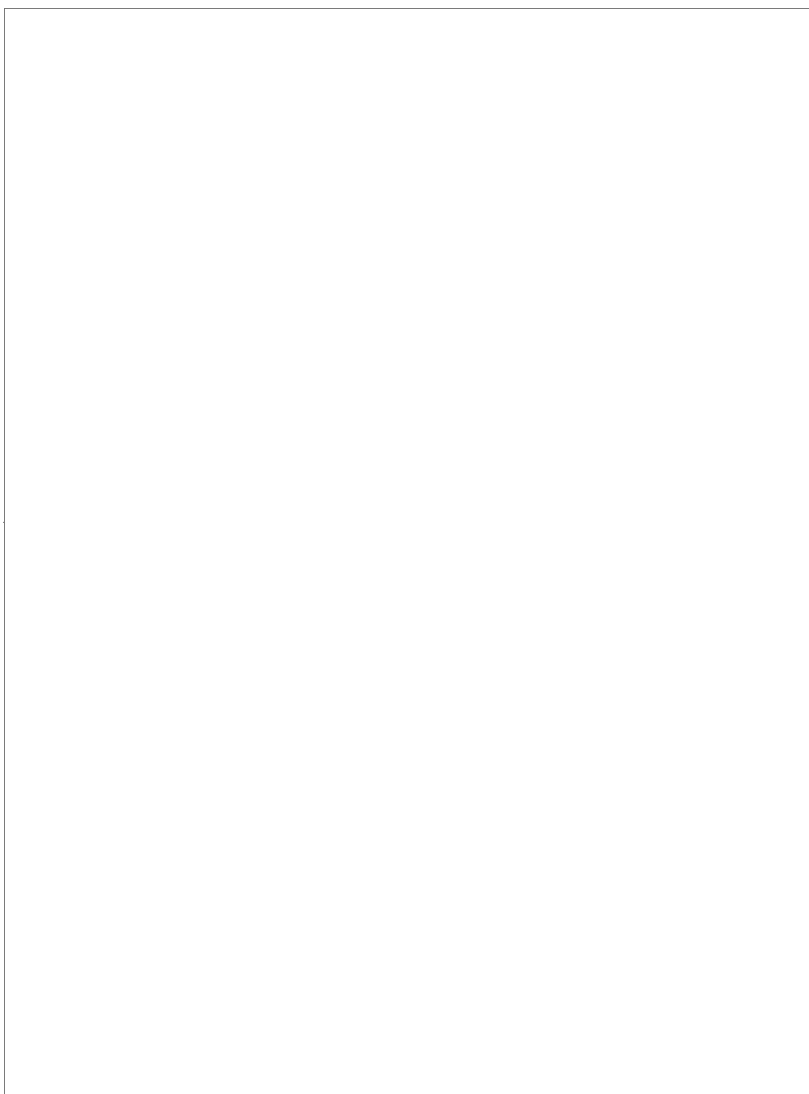
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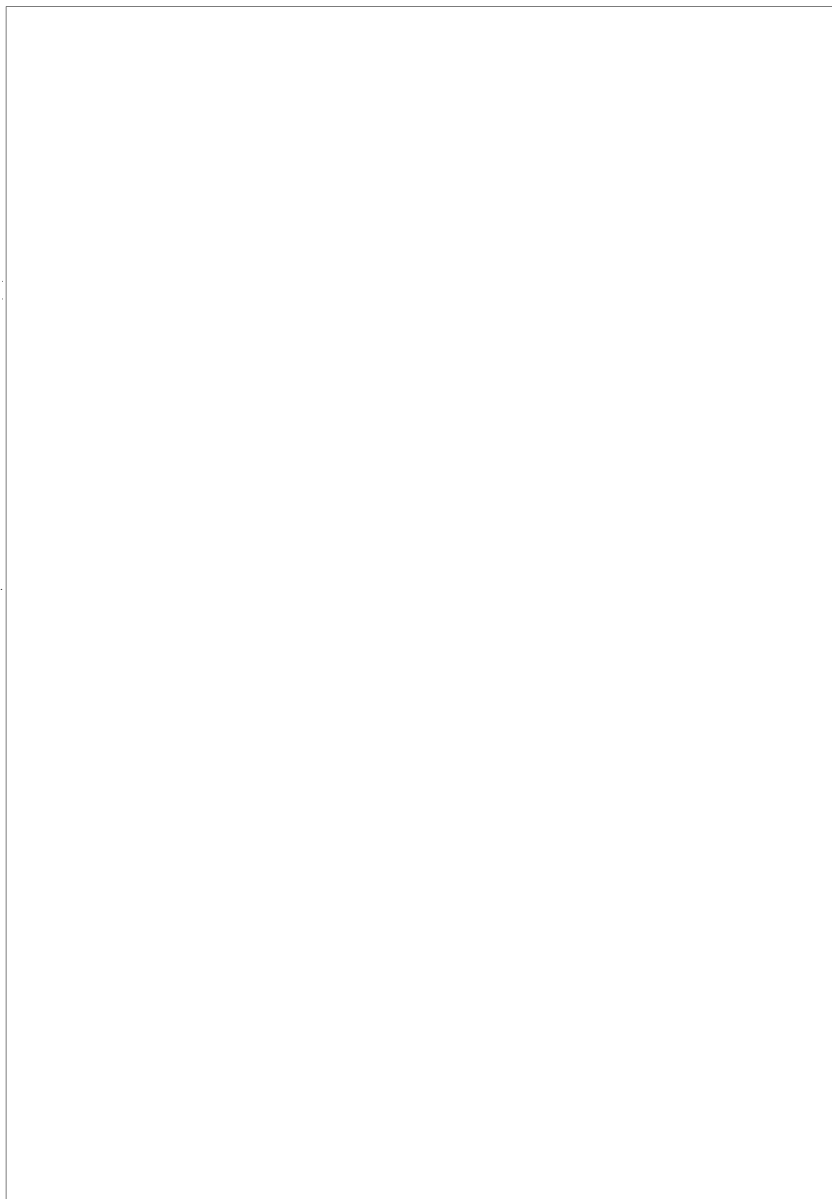


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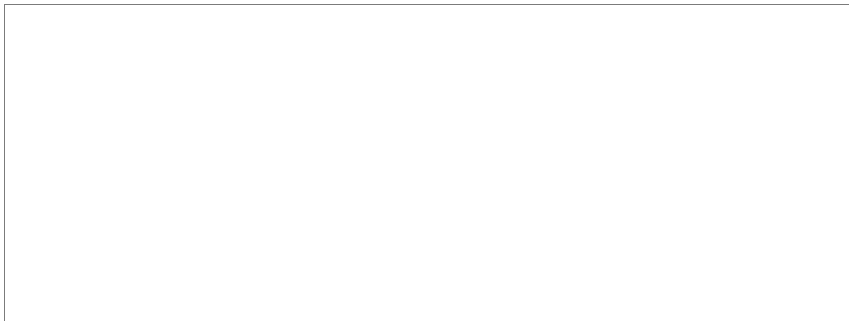


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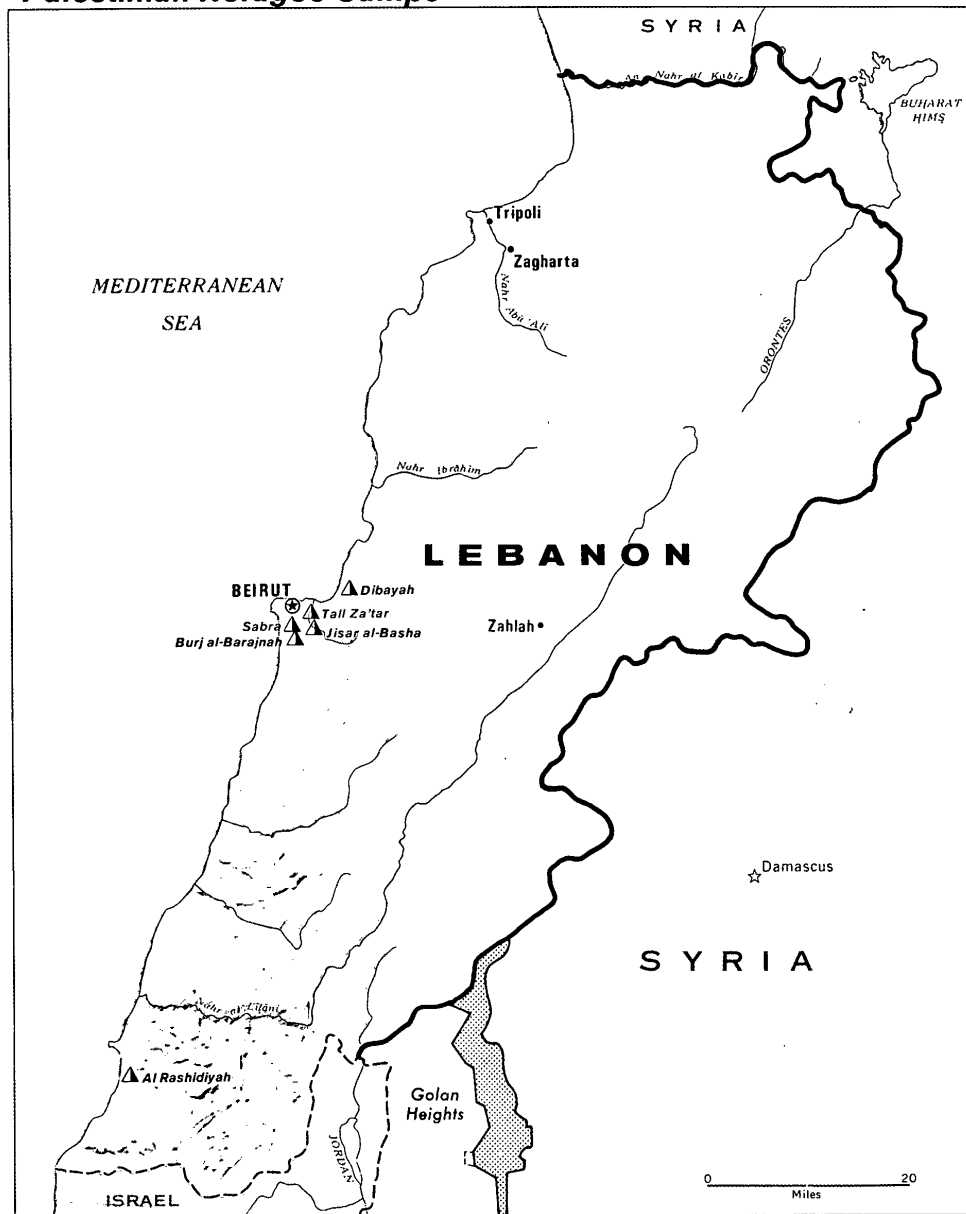
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Palestinian Refugee Camps



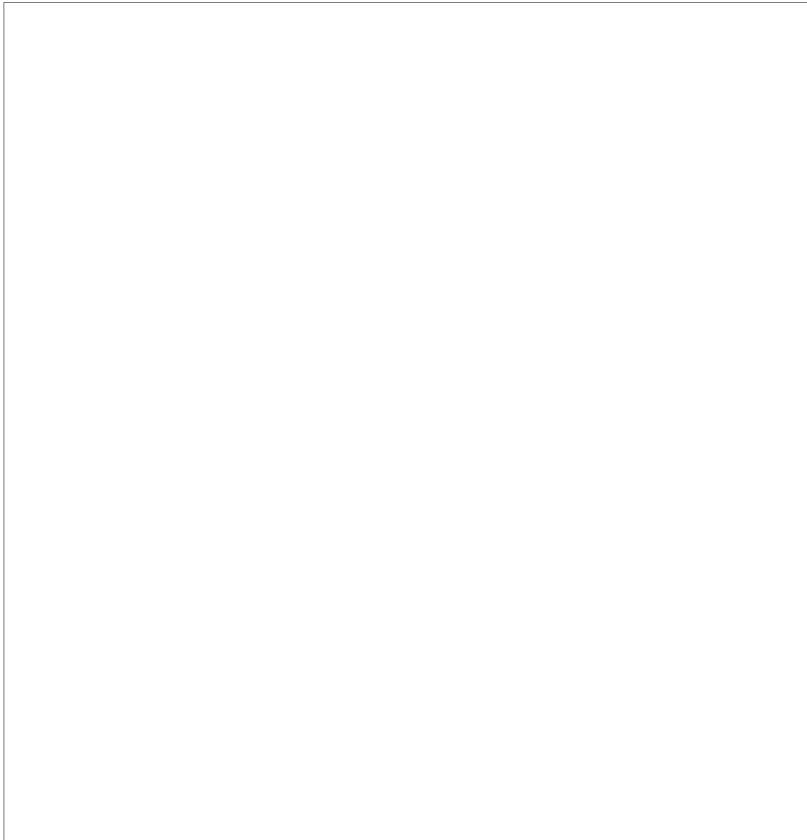
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LEBANON

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*Christian forces yesterday block-
aded a third Palestinian refugee camp,
this one at Dibayah north of Beirut, and
tightened their encirclement of two
camps in the eastern suburbs, Tall Zatar
and Jisar al-Basha.*



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THAILAND

King Phumiphon signed a royal decree yesterday dissolving the National Assembly. Prime Minister Khukrit will remain head of a caretaker administration until a general election is held on April 4.

Khukrit opted for a new election when he concluded that his effort to maintain his coalition by enlarging the cabinet was failing. Thailand will now be faced with at least three more months of weak and indecisive government. Khukrit probably will exploit his control over the government's election machinery to strengthen his own Social Action Party, but his resumption of the prime ministership following a new election is not a foregone conclusion.

Retired army commander Krit Siwara, who was instrumental in bringing down the coalition, is likely to run for a seat in the assembly in order to become eligible for a cabinet position or the prime ministership. If Krit does throw his hat in the ring, the military presumably will be content to remain in the background in the belief that Krit would protect their interests.

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NOTES

The emergency session of the Organization of African Unity adjourned early this morning without reaching any new decisions on Angola.

An official OAU spokesman announced only that the summit had requested the interim standing committee of OAU heads of state to "continue to follow the Angolan problem closely." The outcome is something of a victory for the National Front and the National Union in that it denies OAU recognition to the Popular Movement. At the same time, it probably precludes any OAU effort to promote a coalition government in Angola. In effect, each OAU member now has a free hand on the recognition issue. So far, 21 African states have recognized the Movement's government; none has recognized the Front-Union coalition.

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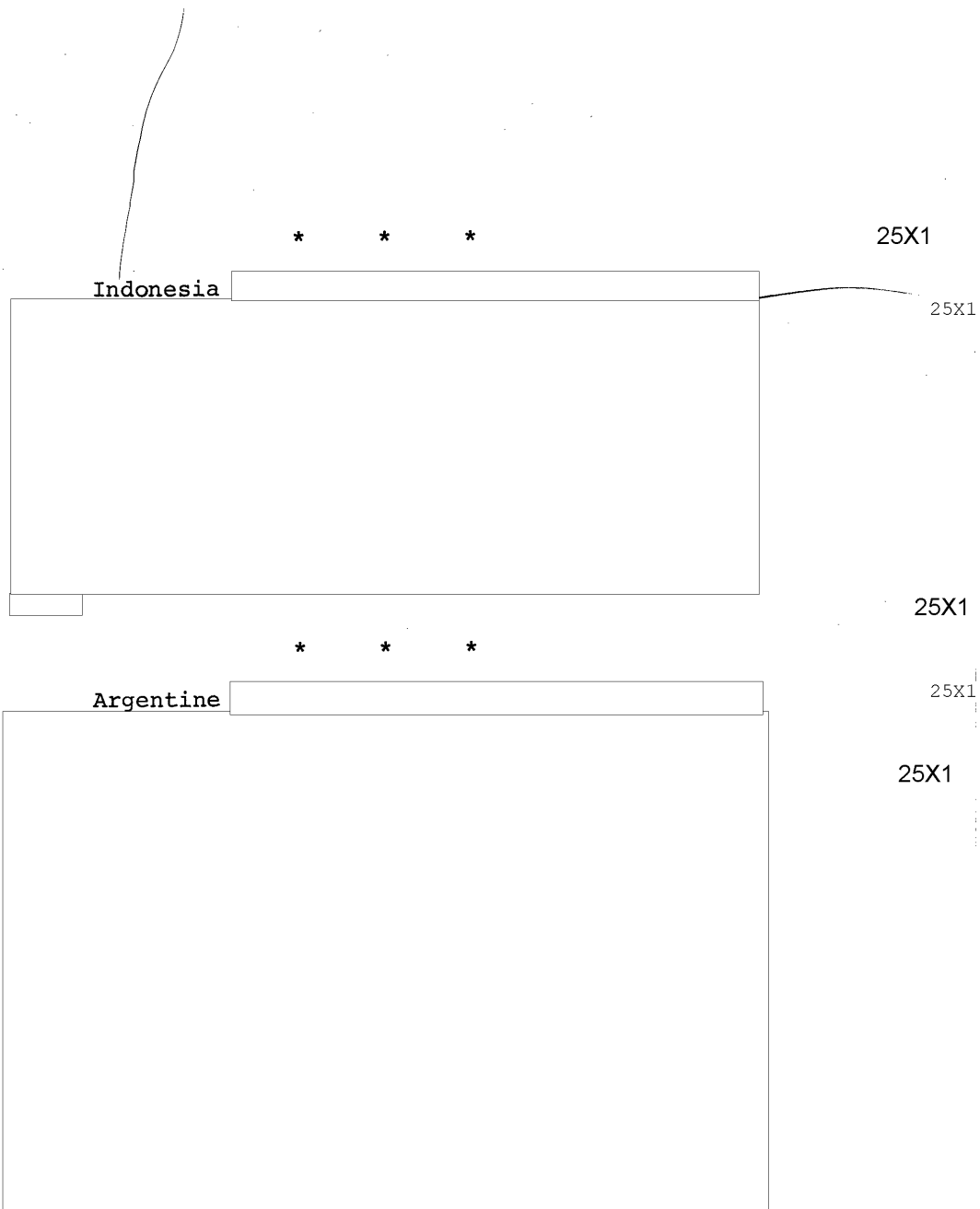
Iceland's disappointment with the results of yesterday's meeting of NATO ambassadors could lead Reykjavik to break relations with the UK and to withdraw from active participation in NATO.

The assembled NATO ambassadors merely urged Britain and Iceland to exercise restraint in the dispute and agreed to send Secretary General Luns, who helped mediate a settlement of the last cod war in 1973, to Reykjavik for talks with government leaders.

Despite this development and Prime Minister Hallgrimsson's efforts to avoid a break in relations with London, the Icelandic cabinet, which is awaiting the decision of a special maritime court on the ramming incident, appears ready to act. Reykjavik, in fact, has already requested Norway to monitor its interests in Britain when the break occurs. Meanwhile, Icelandic fishermen have abandoned their blockade of a NATO communications facility at Grindavik, but have threatened to return if their demands for US help against British "violence" are not met.

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